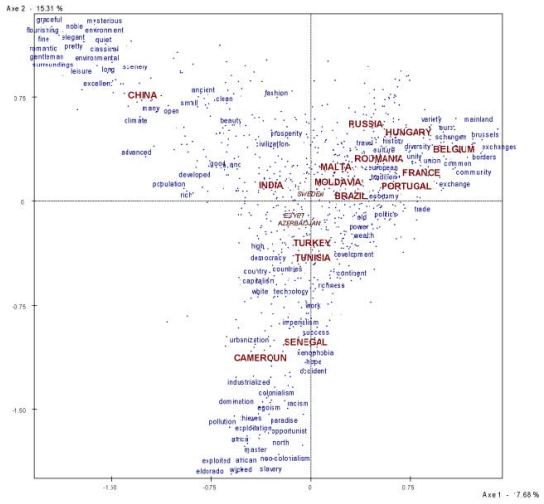
EuroBroadMap

VISIONS OF EUROPE IN THE WORLD

Synthesis

From deliverable 6.3

July 2011



Cross-results on students and migrants surveys

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SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Abstract

This EuroBroadMap working paper crosses quantitative results obtained in the work package 'Mental maps of students' and the qualitative data obtained from surveys on migrants collected in the work package 'Migrants and borders'.

Keywords: Migrants, students, Europe, representations, quantitative data, interviews

Résumé

Ce *working paper* issu du projet EuroBroadMap croise les résultats quantitatifs obtenus au sein du work package 'Cartes mentales des étudiants' avec les données qualitatives issues des entretiens auprès de migrants réalisés dans le work package 'Migrants et frontières'.

Mots clés : Migrants, étudiants, Europe, représentations, données quantitatives, entretiens

Cover: Factorial plan from the vocabulary analysis, work package Mental maps of students

Introduction

The purpose of this text[1] is to provide a cross-interpretation synthesis of the results of the questionnaire's survey (Mental maps of students survey) and of the survey on migrants (interviews and observations).

It is difficult to give a cross-interpretation of the 'Mental maps work of students' work package and 'Migrants and borders' work package data, mostly because the data collection was framed differently in these two work packages. The methods used are different - closed questionnaire *versus* interview and observation - and the information collected on the target populations, on their socio-economic and political situations and on their socio-professional trajectories at the moment of the survey are different, too.

Regarding 'Mental maps work of students' work package, the analysis will mostly focus on the results of the D2 question that focuses on the statistical analysis of the vocabulary used by students to qualify Europe ('mental definition of 'Europe' in words').

'Mental maps work of students' work package (Question D2) highlights the influence of the national senses of belonging and geopolitical positions of the countries toward Europe on the vision students have of it. It also shows the emergence of some groups of countries in which the investigated students mobilise a partially common vocabulary or otherwise.

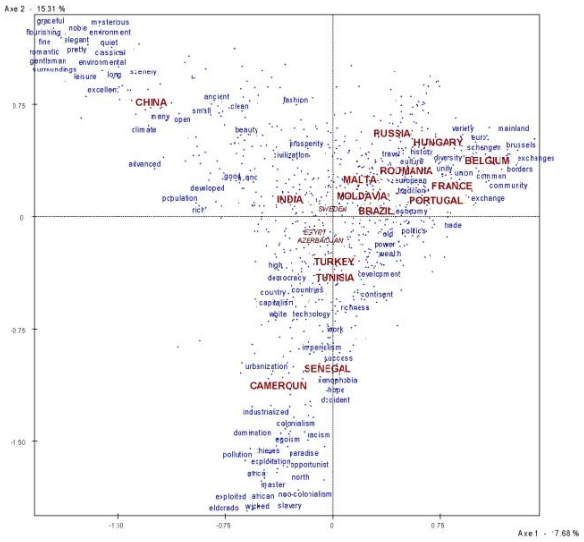
'Migrants and borders' work package indicates how the perception of Europe that the migrants or potential migrants have is organised around three referential axes: historical references recovering from collective or individual memories; socio-economic references; and political references that dominate the imagination and nurture the migratory trajectories.

The confrontation of the results obtained in both of the Work Package, beyond the occurrences that can be found whatever the situation of investigation, reinforce some of the basic assumptions such as the strong structuring of the representations of Europe by European and national institutions. The results also confirm the ambiguity of these representations of Europe and the fluctuating contents of the ambiguity according to the definitions of the situations given by the people asked.

A central idea stands out from this confrontation of both studies: on one hand, the visions of Europe are organised, guided and structured by the official imagery of Europe, built and carried by European or non-European countries and articulated between them; on the other hand, the socio-political relationships that maintain or have maintained the different countries with Europe. In trying to confront the results of 'Mental maps work of students' work package and 'Migrants and borders' work package, three main

[1] This paper benefited from the inputs of the following persons: A. Brennetot, C. Didelon, K. Ensellem, F. Guérin-Pace, and S. de Ruffray

Figure 1: Factorial plan from the vocabulary analysis



Source: Mental of students volume 5, EuroBroadMap working paper 5, p.195

schemes of interpretation may be distinguished regarding the representations of Europe: a 'European-institutional' one, a 'developmentalist' one and an 'imperialist' one. Second, we will present the contents always so ambiguous but according to different modalities toward the situation of the people we questioned and their representations.

1 Three schemes of interpretation

1.1 An institutional vision of Europe

The European-institutional scheme refers to a vision of Europe similar to that circulated by EU institutions on the EU; two specific topics may be evidenced regarding this scheme: a political-economic one and a cultural-historical one.

1.1.1 The political economic aspect of the institutional scheme

The political-economic aspect of the institutional scheme may be found in the results of the 'Mental maps work of students' work package in the following words: 'union', 'euro', 'European', 'exchange', 'community', 'trade'...[2]

[2]On a national scale, the following words are overrepresented: Belgium: 'union', 'euro', 'European', 'economy', 'power', 'exchange', 'community', 'diversity', 'unity'; France:

Except for students living in Russia, these visions of Europe can be interpreted as connected to a common political imagery, an 'imagined community' of those who are members of this European community. For instance, with regard to the students interviewed in Belgium and France, the idea of a territorial entity, in the sense of appropriation, is central to their visions of Europe. More specifically, the visions of students interviewed in Belgium centre on the European commission and the European parliament and are thereby perceived as a whole region, sensitive to the functioning of the institutions of the EU. In the same way, the vocabulary of students interviewed in Portugal refers to a representation of Europe as a regional set, a 'community' of countries, too. Nevertheless, such an interpretation needs further investigation on the statistical distribution of the responding students of WP2 according to their citizenships and countries of origin.

Such an institutional vision is not found among the results of the 'Migrants and borders' work package survey on migrants. In contrast to such an integrated and inclusive vision of Europe, we find the opposite scheme that focuses on the migration policy of EU institutions and member states. Similar to the importance of the institutional scheme on the visions of students living in European countries, migrants' visions are conditioned by migration policy, connected to a European political imagery, a European imagined community, of those who are outside of it. The increasing restrictiveness of this policy has a strong impact on migrants' opportunities to access Europe, and in fact affects their visions of Europe.

The most important finding of this institutional scheme of interpretation is that migrants' institutional visions of Europe differ radically from those of students, focusing on the excluding effects of migration policy rather than on the idea of a unified and inclusive Europe. With the exception of the Somali women in Malta (whose perception of Europe is related to the current conflict in Somalia and to the need for assistance from the West, and has been influenced in Somalia by NGO employees assisting Somalis), all migrants interviewed are aware of EU common policies regarding border controls. They have learned about them from EU member nations' consulates in their countries of origin, organisations for the defence of local or European migrants, whose language and points of view they often adopt, and through their own experiences or those of their 'fortunate' and less fortunate predecessors. The Internet and cellular telephones also play a significant informational role. Migrants have a clear idea of what the common EU border control policy implies in terms of mechanisms of border protection within Europe and throughout their itineraries. They know about fences at Ceuta and Melilla and about the barbed wire along the Prut, the river that separates Romania

'union', 'euro', 'European', 'power', 'economy', 'continent', 'exchanges', 'politics', 'trade', 'unity'; Portugal: 'union', 'European', euro', 'economy', 'community'; Sweden: 'European', 'union'; Russia: 'union', 'euro', 'European'.

and Moldova. They are also aware of more recent EU efforts to limit border crossing between Greece and Turkey, where nocturnal helicopter patrols are backed up by ground police and other sophisticated techniques for detecting their presence in the desert or at sea. They are familiar with Frontex, the EU border security agency, and they eagerly follow the latest updates and recommendations of less dangerous routes or those used by mules. In their own countries, they know about European liaison officers who have come to train local agents to enforce bilateral agreements.

Recent migratory policies have enriched collective imageries, adding new place names to the handful of city names that hold meaning for prospective migrants to Europe. New additions such as Schengen, Seville, Gibraltar, Ceuta and Melilla, Amsterdam and Tempere evoke either the possibility of entry or the impenetrable character of 'Fortress Europe'. Joining the images of Europe that individuals have heard or learned about in other ways are new ones shaped by recent migratory policies. Actually, the visions of Europe built by migrants stand in the articulation of the evolution of migration policies and strategies used by migrants to face these policies.

1.1.2 The cultural historical aspect of the institutional scheme

The culturalhistorical aspect of the institutional scheme (similar to the cultural vision of Europe circulated by European Union institutions on EU) may be found in the results of the 'Mental maps work of students' work package in the following words: 'culture', 'civilization', 'diversity', 'multicultural'[3].

Europe is perceived as possessing a history and a past that constitute the fundamental matrix of all modernity. The students interviewed in Romania, for instance, emphasise the 'civilisation' of Europe, based on its 'culture', its 'history', its 'tradition' and its 'seniority'. Nearly all of the migrants who we interviewed share this Eurocentric idea of Europe, which identifies it with history, progress and modernity, and views it as a continent where human rights are respected. This representation encompasses different contents that vary in their specificity depending on certain variables, including the interviewee's age, social category, rural or urban origins and level of schooling.

1.2 A 'developmentalist' scheme of interpretation

This scheme refers to the economic world order, to the economic inequalities and uneven relations between countries as referred to by international institutions (IMF, World Bank...). It may be found in the results of the 'Mental maps work of students' work package in the following words: 'development',

[3] On a national scale, the following words are overrepresented: Romania: 'culture', 'civilization', 'history', 'diversity', 'unity', 'tradition'; Malta: 'culture', 'art', 'Mediterranean', 'unity', 'multicultural', 'different'; Portugal: 'culture' 'history', multicultural'.

'wealth', 'richness', 'progress', 'technology', 'industrialized'[4].

Such visions can be found in the results of the WP2 among students living in developing or formerly developing countries. These countries are part of a rather heterogeneous group, which includes countries that have been colonised by European empires, as well as former European empires (e.g. Portugal) and former non-European empires (e.g. Turkey). Some of these countries appear also in the following scheme of interpretation, especially the ones who have been colonised by European empires (India, Cameroon).

In migrants' visions of Europe (WP3), Europe is perceived as a rich continent where one can adopt a modern lifestyle and participate in globalisation. Modernity is associated with individualism, which at times is seen as desirable, but at other times is criticised because it engenders inequality and discrimination. The employment situation is well known to departure candidates, but each believes that with courage and the will to work there will always be openings available to foreigners, particularly in occupations already filled by their compatriots.

For instance, departure candidates in Mali are well informed about unemployment rates in Europe, but they also know that there are occupations in which they are 'welcome'. The men hope to gain access to income by being hired in trades related to cleaning, restaurants, construction or manual labour, with additional help from 'odd jobs', even if they are temporary. A list of 'good bosses' who hire undocumented immigrants makes the rounds in Bamako. The risks encountered by undocumented workers or those working in the black economy are widely known, but work in Europe is above all perceived as being protected by labour laws that codify labour relations and provide access to social services. Once they arrive in France, Italy or Spain, migrant men and women discover a far more complex situation, both in terms of its richness and of their own misery. They attribute their misery to their arrival countries' refusal to share their wealth and to Europeans' individualism and selfishness. One of the elements of migrants' imageries of Europe that changes throughout their migratory itineraries relates to discrimination. The rejection of the other and the lack of openness on the part of natives is universally mentioned, and it is felt all the more intensely because the women belong to or are classified as belonging to a lower social category. Furthermore, once they arrive in Europe, this ambiguity is accompanied by a sense of nostalgia whose strength is proportional to how marginalised and insecure they feel in the host country. This feeling leads to a comparison between Europe and their originating country that can cause them to question

[4] On a national scale, see the following overrepresented words: Brazil: 'development', 'wealth', 'richness', 'money', 'quality', 'knowledge'; Tunisia: 'development', 'technology', 'progress', 'wealth'; Turkey: 'modern', 'technology', 'money'; Cameroon: 'industrialized', 'developed', 'capitalism', 'high', 'technology', 'pollution', 'north'; Portugal: 'development'; India: 'developed', 'rich', 'industrialized'; China: 'developed', 'rich', 'advanced'.

the representations at the time of their departure for the supposed continent of liberty and equality. These criticisms are more salient because they refer to the EU. For instance, for Indian migrants who settle in Italy, the daily experience of racism and segregation, the difficulties obtaining work authorisation and even disqualification in some cases serve to heighten the gap between Europe as it is experienced and as it was imagined, reinforcing for some migrants a certain nostalgia for their pre-departure circumstances.

1.2.1 An imperialist scheme of representation

This scheme of interpretation refers to the past (colonial) and present (denoted as neocolonial or postcolonial by some students and migrants) European political domination of others countries. It may be found in the results of the 'Mental maps work of students' work package in the following words: 'colonialism', 'exploitation', 'domination', 'imperialism'[5].

In the 'Mental maps work of students' work package results, this scheme appears in a very strong way in the vocabularies of the students interviewed in Cameroon and Senegal. The expression of a sense of 'exploitation', 'domination' and 'racism' throughout the history of 'colonialism' and 'slavery' appear soon in the representations of Europe of these students. This vision of Europe appears also clearly in the migrants' visions, especially in the visions of Africans. Europe has always dominated Africans, and current policies are only a variant of colonial policy: 'During colonisation, only servant boys and soldiers were accepted on the continent.' 'Going to Europe, forcing one's way across the borders, facing the police and the army, this is our revenge.' 'Ever since slavery, Europe has refused to give us citizenship. Today we want to be citizens of the world.' Recent migratory policies as well as the colonial pasts of India, African nations and, to a lesser extent, Argentina help sustain powerful ambiguities in the representations of Europe, a region with which important historical periods are shared. As a consequence, there is a belief that Europe owes migrants a debt of hospitality, blood and economics.

To conclude, we can observe that a few words do not fit into this typology, such as 'democracy' and 'culture', whereas some occur in the results of all investigated countries, and also in the results of WP3. For migrants, Europe is universally perceived as the land of human rights, freedom and democracy. A few reservations are associated with this vision, however, particularly concerning certain historical episodes and the reception of non-Europeans within and outside Europe's borders. The idea that European governments are functioning, legitimate states where the rule of law is well established is one of the most-often cited justifications for migrants' desires to migrate definitively to Europe. The precarious circumstances of migrants

[5] See for example the following overrepresented words: Cameroon: 'racism', 'exploitation', 'colonialism', 'domination'; Turkey: 'imperialism'; Sweden: 'colonialism'.

waiting passage or with refugee status in Malta, Morocco or Romania reinforces this element of collective imagery.

2 Evolving and ambivalent representations

2.1 Ambivalent representations

Representations that are framed around economic and political issues appear to be ambivalent. For instance, students living in Tunisia use such words as 'freedom', 'rights', 'democracy', 'human' and 'racism'; students living in Sweden use 'multicultural', 'diversity', 'democracy', and 'colonialism'; those in Turkey use 'civilization, 'human', 'rights' and 'imperialism', 'self-interest'; and those living in Cameroon use the words 'democracy' and 'exploitation', 'colonialism', 'racism', 'domination'. For the students in the founding countries of the EU (Belgium, France, Portugal), Europe is seen as a 'union', a means of exchanges, a 'space' with a single 'currency' and a 'power', a community made up of 'diversity' and 'sharing', but also with its 'border', its 'difficulties' and social inequalities. Students interviewed in Turkey, Brazil and India have also both positive and critical representations of Europe: they use the terms 'xenophobia' and 'prejudice' but also 'richness', 'exploration' and 'life' about Europe.

Such ambivalence also appears in the representations of the migrants. Migrants perceive Europe as a powerful continent that has given birth to human progress and produced 'universal' principles, but it is also increasingly seen as having no intention of sharing its wealth or applying its principles outside its borders among the peoples whom it previously dominated and who now contribute to its development. This contradiction is the source of a profound ambivalence in how Europe is perceived by migrants. Furthermore, the 'Migrants and borders' work package survey show that this ambivalence concerns not only the meaning of the visions of Europe, but also the status of these representations. Such representations can be a heritage of the history of the country where the migrant live, of his education or of his life experiences. But these representations can be, at the same time, a reinterpretation of this heritage or even a strategic construction within the building of a migratory project or for the bureaucratic process of access in Europe. This kind of ambivalence appears, for instance, about the idea of debt (debt of hospitality, debt of blood, economic debt).

The impression of sharing a certain number of important historical periods and events with Europe is systematically conveyed in the accounts of Argentinean and African migrants. This sentiment is not solely an echo of the colonial period, however, and it is associated with more recent events such as the participation of immigrants in the economic development of Europe, or, in the case of Argentina, in the Spanish Civil War. This notion of

historical connectedness is directly linked to the notion of a debt owed by Europe to migrants or to their countries. Notions of debt and heritage are actually, and paradoxically, particularly present in the narratives and representations of African migrants, related to the issue of development and are used by interviewees to legitimate migrants' presence in Europe. The idea of reparations, tied to the slave trade and the colonial past, structures the social imaginaries of both Africans in Europe and of African migration candidates. Africans participated in both World Wars, and frequent reference was made by our interviewees to the example of the Senegalese sharp-shooters (who, they often add, were not all Senegalese). Grandparents participated in the Second World War so that Europe could be freed of Nazism: Their blood flowed for France's freedom. The war theme recurs systematically in interviews with Argentinians, regardless of the supposed dates of arrival of their relatives. Spain did not participate in the First or Second World War, but references to exile and to the Spanish Civil War are all the more explicit, echoing the heroic image of combatants that is so present in the Spanish collective imaginary. This heroic warrior figure structures a narrative of origins that ennobles the ancestors' departure for Argentina while allowing the family to share in the European collective memory of blood spilled in the name of freedom, and in a national tragedy. Other traumatic historical events such as the Shoah surface at the margins of these narratives to illustrate the weight of family history. For Argentinians, painful events associated with the war include 'famine' and 'misery' and feature prominently in the narratives of their origins. These stories often allude to the shared suffering of the European population, but they also refer to the hospitality of the Argentine nation. This is the justification offered for the debt owed by Spain to Argentineans. As the originating countries of these earlier emigrations, it appears legitimate that Spain and Italy should in turn welcome migrants in the same way that Argentina welcomed Spaniards and Italians. The notion of debt also appears in the Moldavian migrants' accounts with respect to Romania. Moldova, which was called Bessarabia at the time, was an integral part of Romania between 1918 and 1939, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact attached Moldova to the Soviet Union. Many Moldavians consider themselves Europeans, as illustrated by the waving of European and Romanian flags during a protest in April, 2009 against the election results. For Moldavians, acquiring Romanian citizenship is perceived as a kind of rehabilitation of the historical injustice committed after 1940, when Bessarabia was seized by the USSR. There is a sense of an inherited right to be recognized as Romanian citizens, derived from sharing the same language and history.

2.2 Evolving representations

The 'Migrants and borders' survey has used a method of analysis of the evolution of the representations alongside the migrants' trajectories, from

potential migrants through migrants in transit countries to settled migrants in Europe. Three migratory routes have been investigated: the Mediterranean one, from Africa to Europe; the eastern one, from India to Italy and in Romania; and the Atlantic one, from Argentina to Spain and France. This method allows looking at the visions of Europe as continuously evolving, in connection with the concrete social situations in which they are embedded.

Representations evolve from a blurred vision of Europe (where the words used by migrants can be imprecise and where they sometimes use names of countries or towns to refer to Europe as a whole) to a more precise vision alongside the migration trajectory, correlated with the contacts with friends, relatives, associations and other migrants, and with the experiences of institutions and administrations in charge of the regulation of migrations.

The image of Europe as a rich continent governed by effective social policies changes significantly between a migrant's initial departure and his/her settlement in the country of destination. This image and how it evolves centre on a comparison between the living conditions in the country of departure, those that the migration candidate imagines prevail in Europe, and those that he or she ultimately experiences as an immigrant.